

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory (Public)

FORM 1

Documentation of BLM Wilderness Characteristics Inventory Findings on Record

1. Is there existing BLM wilderness characteristics inventory information on all or part of the area?

No _____ (Go to Form 2) Yes X (If yes, and if more than one area is within the area, list the unique identifiers for those areas.):

a. Inventory Source: 1979 Wilderness Inventory

b. Inventory Area Unique Identifier (s): CDCA 351A

c. Map Name (s)/Number(s): California Desert Wilderness Inventory – South Half 1979

d. BLM District (s)/Field Office (s): CDD/PSSCFO

2. BLM Inventory Findings on Record:

Existing inventory information regarding wilderness characteristics (if more than one BLM inventory area is associated with the area, list each and answer each question individually for each inventory area):

Inventory Source: 1979 Wilderness Inventory

[illegible]

Wilderness Characteristics Inventory (Public)

FORM 2

Current Conditions: Presence or Absence of Wilderness Characteristics

Area Unique Identifier CDCA 1351A-1 Acreage 17,777

(If the inventory area consists of subunits, list the acreage of each and evaluate separately).

In completing steps (1) – (5), use additional space as necessary.

(1) Is the area of sufficient size? (If the area meets one of the exceptions to the size criterion, check "Yes" and describe the exception in the space provided below),

Yes _____ No X

Note: If "No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for the remaining questions below.

Description (describe the boundaries of the area—wilderness inventory roads, property lines, etc.):

This area is bordered on the north by the Bradshaw Trail; on the east, by a transmission corridor right-of-way and access road; on the south, by the Opal Hill Mine Road; and, on the west, by the Wiley Wells Milpitas Wash Road. This unit contains several Northern and Eastern Colorado (NECO) Designated Routes as well as multiple bulldozer scars, permanent habitations and structures, roads and some primitive, yet visible, ways that cross much of this area. Although the unit itself is over 33,000 acres, there are not 5,000 contiguous acres within the unit, therefore not meeting the size criteria of wilderness characteristics.

(2) Does the area appear to be natural?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A X

Note: If "No is checked, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for the remaining questions below.

Description (include land ownership, location, topography, vegetation, and summary of major human uses/activities):

(3) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for solitude?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A X

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for solitude):

(4) Does the area (or the remainder of the area if a portion has been excluded due to unnaturalness and the remaining is of sufficient size) have outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation?

Yes _____ No _____ N/A X

Note: If "No" is checked for both 3 and 4, the area does not have wilderness characteristics; check "N/A" for question 5.

Description (describe the area's outstanding opportunities for primitive and unconfined recreation):

(5) Does the area have supplemental values (ecological, geological, or other features of scientific, educational, scenic or historical value)?

Yes _____

No _____

N/A X

Description:

(Add description here)

Summary of Analysis*

Area Unique Identifier: CDCA 1351A-1

Summary

Although the unit itself is over 17,000 acres, there are not 5,000 contiguous acres within the unit, therefore not meeting the size criteria of wilderness characteristics.

Results of analysis:

1. Does the area meet any of the size requirements? ☐ Yes ☒ No
2. Does the area appear to be natural? ☐ Yes ☒ No
3. Does the area offer outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation? ☐ Yes ☒ No
4. Does the area have supplemental values? ☐ Yes ☒ No

Check one:

☐ The area, or a portion of the area, has wilderness characteristics and is identified as Land with Wilderness Characteristics (LWC)

☒ The area does not have wilderness characteristics.

Prepared by (team members):

John Johnson, ECFO - Environmental Protection Specialist, 6/9/2014

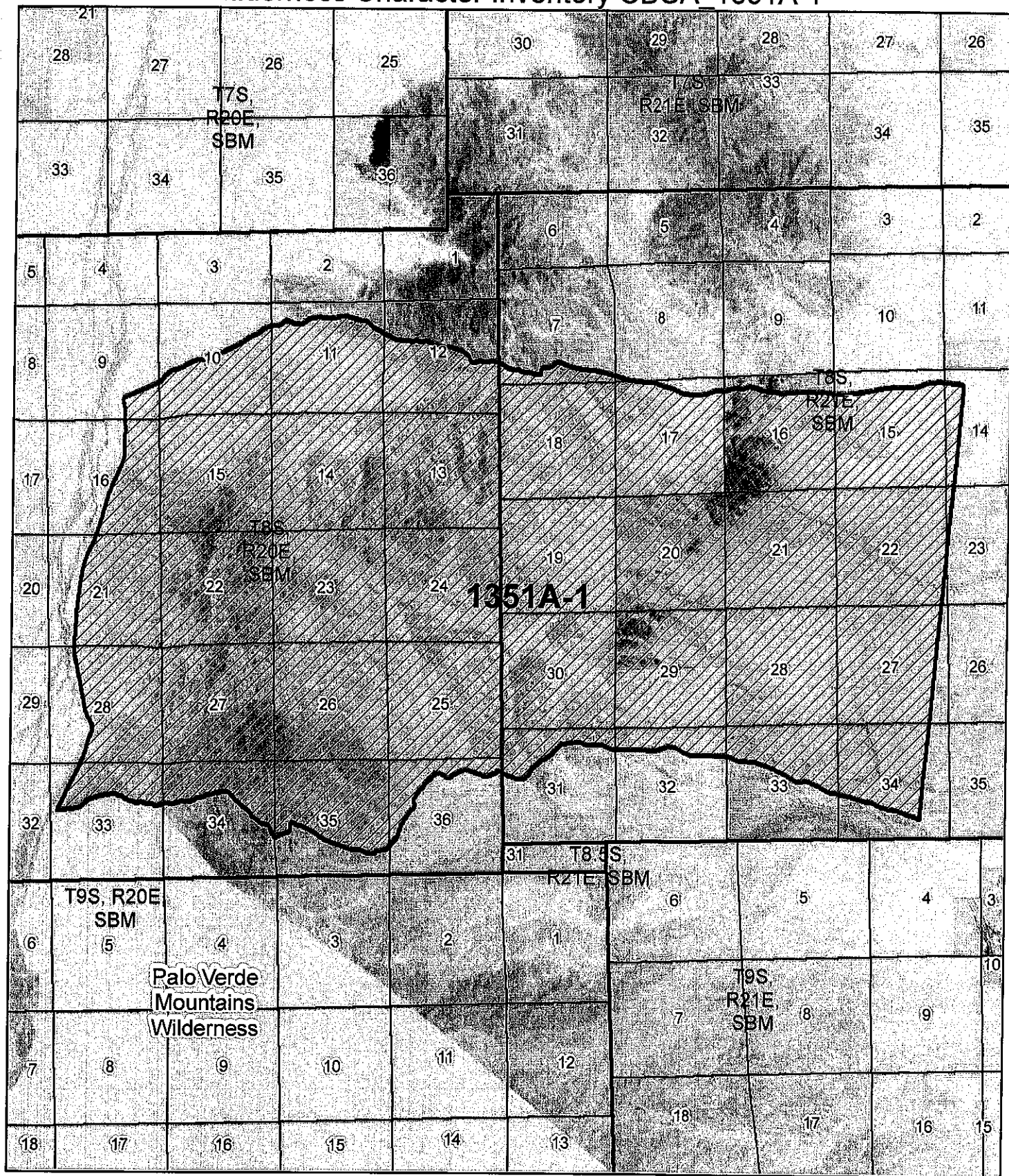
Reviewed by (District or Field Manager):

Name:  Title: Field Manager

Date: 2/9/16

*This form documents information that constitutes and inventory finding on wilderness characteristics. It does not represent a formal land use allocation or a final agency decision subject to administrative remedies under either 43 CFR or 1610.5-3

Wilderness Character Inventory CDCA 1351A-1



Legend

Wilderness Inventory Unit
Federal Wilderness Surface Management
Managing Agency

Bureau of Land Management

US Forest Service

National Park Service

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Government Lands

AGENCY

Bureau of Land Management

Forest Service

National Park Service

Fish and Wildlife Service

Bureau of Reclamation

Bureau of Indian Affairs

Department of Defense

Other Federal

State

Local Government



0 1 2 Miles
1:73,298



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Date Prepared: 1/21/2016
Project: CDCA_1351A-1



0 1.5 3 Miles



enhance the ability of the area to screen visitors from one another. The diverse topography and lack of man-made improvements allow a freedom of unconfined movement.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments addressing inventory criteria were evenly divided between agreement with the area's inclusion and noting the many roads and trails missed in the draft inventory. After an additional field check, appropriate changes were made. A few comments dealt with study phase issues.

AREA 351

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

The northern boundary parallels a maintained access road. The western boundary is the Wiley Wells Road; the southern, the Bradshaw Stage Road; and, the eastern, several maintained mining and powerline access roads.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The boundaries include approximately 10 sections of non-public land scattered throughout the site and accounting for approximately 20 percent of the land area.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

This area consists of both rolling and rugged mountain terrain, as well as an open bajada and small sand dune system. Large stands of creosote vegetation cover the extensive bajadas, while the mountain slopes are sparsely vegetated. Ironwood grows in washes, notably in the northwestern portion of this roadless area.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Man has impacted the area to the point that it no longer retains its natural character. The mountains have been encroached upon on all sides by mining operations, some still active, leaving conspicuous tailing dumps, mine structures, and tunnels with a profusion of roads and ways radiating from them. Most of the bajada surrounding the mountains is laced with tracks and trails in the desert pavement. The northern portion of the area contains numerous man-made features, including human habitation, communication cables, above and below ground, pipelines, and a Federal Aviation Administration communication site.

V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

Although some isolated enclaves do provide some opportunities for solitude, the major portion of the area offers only limited opportunities due to the conspicuous presence of the many works of man. These encroaching man-made features would also have a confining effect on the visitor.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments were fairly evenly divided between those who supported the area's inclusion for further wilderness study and those who felt the natural values had been impaired. The area has been excluded from further wilderness study as a result of its impaired natural condition and limited opportunities for solitude and a primitive and unconfined type of recreation.

AREA 351A

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This area is bordered on the north by the Bradshaw Stage Road; on the east, by a transmission corridor right-of-way and access road; on the south, by the Opal Hill Mine Road; and, on the west, by the Wiley Wells Milpitas Wash Road.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

About 15 percent of the area is in non-public, randomly-placed lands.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

The southern portion of the rolling and sparsely vegetated Mile Mountains make up the western portion of this area. The eastern portion includes a large pebble terrace and flats covered with desert pavement and savannah-like vegetation.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

Much of this area is marred by man-made features which have altered the natural appearance of the landscape. In the southwestern portion, the Opal Hill Mine is highly visible and includes bulldozer scars, permanent habitations and structures, and roads. Some primitive, yet highly visible, ways cross much of this area, and man's work is substantially noticeable.

V. OUTSTANDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR SOLITUDE OR A PRIMITIVE AND UNCONFINED TYPE OF RECREATION

Due to the Opal Hill Mine, numerous ways, sparse vegetation and open topography, outstanding opportunities for solitude or a primitive and unconfined type of recreation are restricted.

VI. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS

Comments generally agreed with the findings. Some interest was expressed in a further study of the northwest portion.

AREA 352

I. PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES

This area is bounded on the north by the Opal Hill Mine Road; on the west and south by the Coon Hollow - Milpitas Wash Road; and, on the east, by a transmission line right-of-way across the Palo Verde Mesa.

II. LAND OWNERSHIP

The boundaries include approximately 25 sections of non-public land checkerboarded in the southern and western portions and accounting for approximately 8 percent of the land.

III. DESCRIPTION OF ENVIRONMENT

This area includes rolling hills, and steep, colorful, jagged volcanic mountain peaks. Small, narrow canyons lead into enclosed basins and intimate valleys. Although vegetation is sparse, large stands of Ironwood are found in Milpitas Wash and a small palm oasis is located at Clapp Spring. Large, vast flat areas of desert pavement surround much of the Palo Verde Mountains.

IV. NATURAL CONDITION

The vast majority of this area is affected primarily by the forces of nature with man's work substantially unnoticeable. Rockhound activity is very much in evidence, but the ruggedness and dramatic rock spires far overwhelm the impact of man's alteration. Thus, the area retains its primeval character and influence. The northern portion of this area contains permanent improvements and human habitation in the form of the Opal Hill Mine and numerous primitive ways and inactive mining claims. This portion north of a jeep trail, has been excluded from wilderness consideration. The checkerboard portion at the southern end of the area has been excluded due to the non-contiguous land status, a road, and off-road vehicle impacts. The potential Wilderness Study Area boundary is common with the roadless area boundary on the east and west. The southern boundary is formed by private land. The permanent improvements and areas of human habitation, primitive ways and inactive mining claims have been excluded from the northern portion of the area.